

Physiotherapy Department  
**Helping your wrist to  
recover after a fracture**  
Information for patients



This leaflet gives you advice and exercises to help your wrist to recover after your fracture. Now that you have had your cast removed it is very important that you use your wrist as normally as possible. At first your wrist will feel stiff and possibly painful. This is because it has been held in one place by the plaster.

## Removing dry skin

We advise you to soak your arm after your cast comes off to remove the dry skin. Do this by placing your arm in warm water for about 5-10 minutes. The dry skin should then easily rub off with a towel. This can then be followed by using a moisturising cream. You can rub any type of moisturiser over your hand and forearm to help soften the skin.

## Swelling and pain

Your wrist and hand may swell up after the cast is removed. If this happens, keep your hand raised up as much as possible. This will minimize the swelling. One way of doing this is to put your hand on your opposite shoulder when you are not using it.

Pain and swelling can be eased by using ice for 5-10 minutes over the wrist area. Wrap the ice in a damp towel to protect the skin. Basic painkillers will also help.

If the pain becomes severe or continuous we suggest you contact your GP for advice.

## Exercise

It is important that you start to exercise your arm as soon as your cast is removed. By exercising and regaining normal movements, the feeling of stiffness and pain will gradually subside.

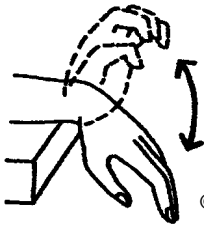
You may find the elbow and shoulder joints are stiff too, so keep these moving if they are not injured.

The exercises will be most effective if practised regularly. We suggest doing the exercises 3 to 4 times a day. It is better to repeat the exercises a few times every hour, rather than once a day for a longer period.

## The exercises

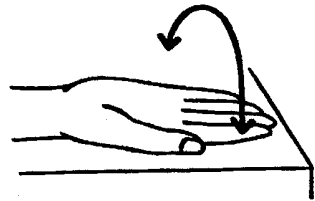
We suggest that you repeat the following exercises 10 times each.

1. Rest forearm on a table with hand over the edge. Bend hand towards floor and then raise up towards the ceiling. Check that the movement only takes place at the wrist.



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3. Place your forearm on the table. Turn your palm down, and then up, keeping the elbow still.



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## Finger and thumb exercises

2. Rest the palm of your hand on the table. Tilt the hand one way and then the other.



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4. Touch your thumb to the tip of each finger. Repeat this as quickly as possible.



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5. Make a tight fist, ensuring your knuckles are bent to a right angle. Use your other hand to help if necessary. Then fully straighten the fingers.



6. With the palm of your hand facing upwards, bend thumb across palm of hand to base of little finger and then stretch out to side as far as possible.



7. With the palm of your hand facing the ceiling, lift your thumb away from your palm towards the ceiling.



## Useful telephone numbers

Fracture Clinic: (01865) 740315  
Physiotherapy  
(John Radcliffe): (01865) 221540 or 221539  
Physiotherapy Reception  
(Horton General Hospital): 01295 229432

Name of your consultant:

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Red / Blue team

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

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